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## Bosnia Stabilization Force (SFOR) and U.S. Policy

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# Bosnia Stabilization Force (SFOR) and U.S. Policy

## Summary

In December 1995, a NATO-led implementation force (IFOR) was deployed to Bosnia to enforce the military aspects of the Bosnian peace agreement. President Clinton said the deployment would last “about one year.” The United States contributed about 19,000 troops to the approximately 54,000-man force. IFOR successfully completed its main military tasks, but implementation of the civilian aspects of the accord, for which IFOR did not have direct responsibility, was at best a mixed success. Faced with the possible collapse of the peace agreement if IFOR pulled out, on November 15, 1996, President Clinton pledged to keep U.S. troops in Bosnia as part of a NATO-led Stabilization Force (SFOR) until June 1998. SFOR numbers about 25,000, of which currently about 7,500 are U.S. troops. There are also about 3,300 U.S. support personnel in Croatia (927) and Hungary (2,400). Roughly 900 U.S. Air Force and Navy aviation personnel are performing air support missions for SFOR from bases in Italy or aircraft carriers.

The change in SFOR’s composition reflected not only a change in the mission, but also a new estimate of the potential for conflict. IFOR separated warring factions and enforced arms cantonment with heavy forces to deter any thought of opposition. As the mission progressed, the prospect of significant military opposition receded, and NATO commanders reduced and reshaped the force even before IFOR’s mandate ended in December 1996. Some observers questioned the focus and clarity of SFOR’s mission. SFOR’s mission is primarily on focussed ongoing military tasks and is not explicitly tied to any political, civilian implementation, or reconstruction milestone. In late 1997, the United States and other countries participating in SFOR found themselves in much the same dilemma that they faced in late 1996 — either pull out and face the possibility of a resumption of fighting, or remain in Bosnia and continue a seemingly open-ended commitment. On December 18, 1997, President Clinton announced that he had agreed in principle that U.S. forces should participate in a Bosnia peacekeeping force after the mandate of the current SFOR expires in June 1998. He did not set a new departure deadline, but said the force would leave only when key peace implementation milestones have been achieved.

After fierce debate, the House and Senate passed separate resolutions in December 1995 expressing support for the U.S. troops in Bosnia, although not necessarily for the mission itself. Legislative efforts to bar funds for the deployment of U.S. troops to Bosnia were narrowly rejected. In the 105th Congress, similar efforts to bar a U.S. deployment after June 1998 were also rejected, although the FY 1998 defense authorization and appropriations laws contain reporting requirements that must be fulfilled before an extended deployment may take place. The defense appropriation measure requires the President to seek a supplemental appropriation for any deployment after June 1998.



## **Contents**

Background (Prepared by Steven Woehrel, Specialist in European Affairs) . . . .	1
SFOR\DFOR Overview (Prepared by Steven R. Bowman, Specialist in National Defense) . . . . .	3
SFOR/DFOR Mission Clarity and “Mission Creep” . . . . .	6
Administration Policy on SFOR and an SFOR Follow-on Force (Prepared by Julie Kim and Steven Woehrel) . . . . .	8
Congressional Concerns (Prepared by Julie Kim and Steven Woehrel) . . .	10
SFOR Costs (Prepared by Steven Woehrel) . . . . .	11
U.S. Commitment (Prepared by Steven Woehrel) . . . . .	12

## **List of Figures**

SFOR Dispositions. SOURCE: URL <a href="http://www/dtic.dla.mil:80/bosniamap.html">www/dtic.dla.mil:80/bosniamap.html</a> . . .	13
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# Bosnia Stabilization Force (SFOR) and U.S. Policy

## **Background (Prepared by Steven Woehrel, Specialist in European Affairs)**

After three years of war in Bosnia, on November 21, 1995, the presidents of Serbia-Montenegro, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, as well as representatives of the Muslim-Croat Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Bosnian Serb Republika Srpska, initialed a largely U.S.-mediated peace agreement for Bosnia-Herzegovina at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base near Dayton, Ohio. The final peace agreement was signed by the parties in Paris on December 14, 1995. In order to enforce the military aspects of the agreement, the agreement called for a NATO-led implementation force (IFOR) to be deployed to Bosnia. In a nationally televised address on November 27, 1995, President Clinton justified dispatching U.S. troops to Bosnia as part of IFOR by saying U.S. engagement was needed to stop the great suffering caused by the war; to bring stability in Europe, a region vital to U.S. interests; and to maintain U.S. leadership in NATO. President Clinton said the deployment would last "about one year." Subsequent statements by Administration officials asserted that U.S. forces would be out of Bosnia by the end of 1996. The United States contributed about 19,000 troops to the approximately 54,000-man force.

On December 15, 1995, the U.N. Security Council authorized the deployment of IFOR. On the next day, NATO's North Atlantic Council approved the IFOR deployment, activating the deployment of the main body of troops. On December 20, 1996, the U.N. force in Bosnia (UNPROFOR) transferred its authority to IFOR, starting the process of implementing the military aspects of the peace agreement. Over the next year, IFOR successfully completed its main military tasks, which were to separate the forces on the ground and oversee their demobilization.

However, implementation of the civilian aspects of the accord, for which IFOR did not have direct responsibility, was at best a mixed success. Civilian aspects of the accord were coordinated by High Representative Carl Bildt, while various international bodies were charged with helping to implement aspects of the accord. It should be noted that the chief responsibility for peace implementation rested with the Bosnian parties, who showed intransigence on many issues. Freedom of movement remained limited and very few refugees returned to their homes. Indicted war criminals remained at large. Elections were held for most levels of government on September 14, 1996, without violence or other serious incidents. However, many observers charged that the election campaign was less than free and fair, and some alleged possible fraud in the vote count. Municipal elections, which were to have been held on September 14, 1996, were postponed by the Organization for Security

and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) until September 13-14, 1997, due to fraud and manipulation of registration procedures, primarily by the Bosnian Serbs, and other problems. Common Bosnian government institutions were created only in January 1997. Internationally funded reconstruction efforts began to show some results in rebuilding infrastructure, albeit almost entirely in the Federation, but had not touched off a self-sustaining economic recovery.

Although IFOR's primary responsibility was to assure the implementation of the military aspects of the peace accord (and by doing so provide a secure environment in which civilian implementation could take place), it also aided some civilian implementation efforts directly on a case-by-case basis. For example, IFOR helped to transport ballots and other electoral materials to polling stations, and secured 19 routes across the Inter-Entity Boundary Line (IEBL) for voters on election day. IFOR's policy regarding indicted war criminals was that IFOR would arrest and detain such persons if it came in contact with them, but it would not actively seek out or hunt down war criminals. IFOR arrested no war criminals during its deployment.

Because of the relatively slow progress on civilian implementation and reconstruction, President Clinton decided, on April 30, 1996, to keep U.S. forces in IFOR at full strength through the Bosnian election on September 14, in order to support the election process. He said the United States would maintain a robust force in Bosnia until IFOR's one-year mandate expired on December 20, 1996. However, Administration officials continued to insist that U.S. forces planned to leave Bosnia within a few weeks after December 20, 1996, despite concerns raised by observers (including high-ranking U.S. intelligence officials) that fighting was likely to resume in Bosnia unless a U.S.-led international force remained in place in Bosnia after the expiry of IFOR's mandate. Even after NATO ministers met on September 22, 1996, to discuss post-IFOR options, Administration officials maintained that it was too early to say whether a follow-on force would be deployed.

On November 15, 1996, President Clinton said that the Administration had agreed in principle to send U.S. troops to Bosnia as part of a new NATO-led peacekeeping force for Bosnia. Clinton said the force would remain there until June 1998. He added that a review would be conducted every six months to determine whether stability could be maintained with fewer forces. President Clinton said that he expected that the force would be reduced by half by the end of 1997. He said the mission of the Stabilization Force (SFOR) would be to "prevent a resumption of hostilities so that economic reconstruction and political reconciliation can accelerate." NATO ministers approved the SFOR plan on December 10, 1996, and the U.N. Security Council authorized the force on December 12, for an 18-month period. SFOR formally took over command from IFOR on December 20, 1996.

In late 1997, the United States and other countries participating in SFOR found themselves in much the same dilemma that they faced in late 1996 — either pull out and face the possibility of a resumption of fighting, or remain in Bosnia and continue a seemingly open-ended commitment. On December 18, 1997, President Clinton announced that he had agreed in principle that U.S. forces should participate in a Bosnia peacekeeping force after the mandate of the current SFOR expires in June 1998. He did not set a new departure deadline, but said the force would leave only



when key peace implementation milestones have been achieved. This follow-on force has been unofficially dubbed Deterrent Force (DFOR) by some observers.

## **SFOR\DFOR Overview (Prepared by Steven R. Bowman, Specialist in National Defense)**

NATO Headquarters is not expected to announce the size and composition of the Deterrent Force (DFOR) until February 1998. Nevertheless, a few general observations are possible. It is unlikely there will be a major reduction in the number of troops as occurred in the transition from IFOR to SFOR (54,000 down to 34,000). The roster of other countries participating, currently 34, is also expected to remain substantially the same, with the United States, Great Britain, Germany, and France providing the bulk of the forces. Though deployment numbers are not yet available, Table 1 provides both IFOR and SFOR information for informational purposes. (See also CRS Issue Brief 93056, *Bosnia: U.S. Military Operations*, for updated deployment data.)

Though there has been some political pressure, particularly in the United States, to reduce the force size, or at least the U.S. contingent, NATO's Supreme Allied Commander, General Wesley Clark, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General Hugh Shelton, believe that any significant reduction could erode effectiveness and place remaining troops at greater risk. NATO's military planners believe that a robust and obvious military presence is the most effective means to forestall a resumption of hostilities and to provide an environment conducive to Dayton Accords implementation. They wish to avoid a military posture that could tempt dissident factions to "test" NATO's resolve or response. There has been speculation that the size of the U.S. contingent, currently 8,500, may be reduced, but by no more than 500-1,000 troops. There are also about 3,000 U.S. personnel stationed in Hungary, Croatia, and Italy fulfilling support functions, and this is expected to remain constant.

The U.S. Army and Air Force Reserves will continue to play very significant roles in Bosnia operations. For the Army, units of particular importance (e.g. civil affairs, foreign area specialists) are to a great extent reserve component units. In the Air Force, pilots in the Reserve have played a large role in Bosnia operations dating back to the Sarajevo airlift. As a result of the decision to extend operations indefinitely, the President will probably renew the Reserve call-up authority which expires August 15, 1998. The current call-up authorizes 6,700 reservists to active duty, but only 4,252 had been actually activated as of December 1997. Not all reservists have deployed to Bosnia; many have back-filled positions left by deploying troops or are performing support functions elsewhere in Europe or the United States.

	<b>IFOR March 4, 1996</b>	<b>SFOR December, 1997</b>
Austria	1 transport company	1 transport company
Belgium	1 transport company (300)	1 transport company (120)
Canada	1 armored reconnaissance squadron 1 engineer battalion (1,000)	1 mechanized battle group (1,200)
Czech Republic	1 mechanized infantry battalion 1 engineer company	1 mechanized infantry battalion (640)
Denmark	1 mechanized infantry battalion (800)	1 mechanized infantry battalion (700)
Egypt	1 mechanized infantry battalion	1 mechanized infantry battalion (270)
Finland	1 engineer battalion	1 engineer battalion (339)
France	4 mechanized infantry battalions 1 mechanized artillery battalion 1 engineer battalion 1 helicopter squadron 1 reconnaissance squadron (10,000)	1 infantry battalion 1 helicopter squadron 1 military police company 1 engineer company (3,223)
Germany	No troops deployed in Bosnia; IFOR support units located in Croatia (4,000)	1 reconnaissance battalion 1 helicopter squadron 1 logistics battalion 1 transportation battalion 1 field hospital (2,500)
Greece	1 transport battalion (1,000)	1 transport company (250)
Hungary	1 engineer battalion	1 engineer battalion (256)
Italy	1 mechanized infantry battalion 1 armored company 1 mechanized artillery battery (2,100)	1 infantry battalion 1 mechanized artillery battery 1 engineer company (1,800)

	<b>IFOR March 4, 1996</b>	<b>SFOR December, 1997</b>
Luxembourg	1 transport company	1 transport company (30)
Malaysia	1 mechanized infantry battalion	1 mechanized infantry battalion (928)
Morocco	1 mechanized infantry battalion (650)	1 mechanized infantry battalion (647)
Netherlands	1 mechanized infantry battalion (2,000)	1 mechanized infantry battalion (1,084)
Norway	1 logistics battalion (1,000)	1 logistics battalion (615)
Poland	1 airborne infantry battalion	1 airborne infantry battalion (399)
Portugal	1 airborne infantry battalion (900)	1 infantry battalion (323)
Romania	1 engineer battalion	1 engineer battalion (208)
Russia	2 airborne infantry battalions	2 airborne infantry battalions 1 artillery battery 1 engineer battalion (1,387)
Spain	2 mechanized infantry battalions	2 mechanized infantry battalions (1,556)
Sweden	1 mechanized infantry battalion	1 mechanized infantry battalion 1 infantry battalion (489)
Turkey	1 mechanized infantry battalion (1,200) 1 armored company	2 mechanized infantry battalions 1 armored company 1 artillery battery (1,500)
United Kingdom	2 mechanized infantry battalions 1 mechanized armored battalion 1 armored reconnaissance company 1 artillery battalion 1 helicopter battalion 1 signal regiment (13,000)	1 mechanized battle group 1 armored battle group 1 infantry company 1 artillery regiment 1 military police battalion 1 electronic warfare company 1 antitank helicopter squadron 1 support helicopter squadron 1 aviation squadron (5,300)

	<b>IFOR March 4, 1996</b>	<b>SFOR December, 1997</b>
United States	2 mechanized infantry battalions 2 armored battalions 2 reconnaissance battalions 1 airborne battalion 2 mechanized artillery battalions 1 engineer brigade 1 air defense battalion 2 psychological operations companies	2 mechanized infantry battalions 1 artillery battalion 1 air defense battalion 2 military police battalions 1 military police company 1 aviation regiment 1 armored engineer battalion 1 psychological operations company (8,500)
Ukraine	1 helicopter company	1 mechanized infantry battalion (380)

Source: Department of Defense

## **SFOR/DFOR Mission Clarity and “Mission Creep”**

NATO's mission statement for Bosnia operations distinguishes between primary and secondary mission, as follows

- **Primary:** To ensure its self defense and freedom of movement; to supervise the marking of boundaries and Zones of Separation; to monitor and enforce withdrawals of forces in keeping with agreement provisions; to assume control of Bosnia airspace and military movement over key ground routes; and to establish Joint Military Commissions.
- **Secondary:** To help to create secure conditions for others' conduct of non-military provisions of the peace agreement; assist the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other international organizations in humanitarian missions; assist in the prevention of interference with civilian population movement, responding appropriately to deliberate violence; and assist in implementing arms control and regional stability measures

The primary military-related tasks were accomplished early in the operation, and monitoring compliance has continued without significant incident. Carrying out some of the “civilian” tasks of the Dayton Accord (e.g. capture of those indicted by the War Crimes Tribunal, or refugee resettlement) has proven more difficult. Consequently, there has been strong pressure on NATO commanders for quite some time to devote more resources to their secondary missions, and beginning in the summer 1997 SFOR troops took a somewhat more active role. U.S. troops seized radio stations broadcasting “inflammatory” material, some administrative buildings were taken from hardline supporters of former leaders and turned over to the new

Bosnia Serb officials. These actions notwithstanding, pressure will continue to on NATO forces to do more to facilitate the civil implementation activities.

One cause for increasing pressure is that, unlike its predecessors IFOR and SFOR, DFOR has no date set for its withdrawal. Rather, the duration of its deployment will be tied to as yet undetermined “benchmarks” in the implementation of the Dayton Accords. NATO commanders will consequently have a greater direct interest in the success of implementation efforts, as their success will govern the length of deployment.

In July 1997 British SFOR troops arrested one war crimes suspect and killed another who resisted arrest. This was the first such action by NATO forces. Since then Dutch troops have arrested two more and, in December 1997, U.S. troops arrested another. NATO's new Supreme Commander, General Wesley Clark, has indicated that he considers the forces protecting Radovan Karadzic and General Ratko Mladic, former Bosnian Serb leaders and indicted war crimes suspects, to be “paramilitaries” and therefore under SFOR jurisdiction according to the Dayton Agreements. This assessment could provide the legal basis for NATO military operations to arrest Karadzic. Speculation continues, amidst repeated rumors, on whether NATO will undertake additional operations to seize indicted war crimes suspects. Indicted Serb leaders Karadzic and Mladic present the greatest challenge for two reasons. First, they are the most heavily guarded. Secondly, some observers believe that their arrest would spark widespread violence among Bosnia Serbs and consequently embroil DFOR in armed conflict, or at least make its troops targets for terrorist attacks. Others have suggested that Karadzic and Mladic have lost considerable popular support among the Serb population as a whole, and that their arrest would be a major step forward for the Bosnian peace process rather than the spark for further conflict. While action against these more heavily guarded suspects may not occur in the short term, it is reasonable to expect SFOR to be more diligent in its efforts to detain unguarded suspects whose whereabouts are known.

Even more challenging for DFOR would be assisting the process of refugee resettlement and the reestablishment of multi-ethnic government administration in “ethnically-cleansed” areas. Resettlement areas are scattered throughout the country, local hostilities often remain high, and low-level violence frequent. NATO commanders were hesitant to become involved in resettlement protection even at the outset of IFOR operations when their force levels were at their highest. Consequently, it is unclear what efforts a much smaller force will undertake. If resettlement activities are accelerated, the likelihood of mob violence increases, as will pressure for DFOR to deter or quell disturbances. While large-scale escort or protection operations are unlikely unless there is a major policy shift, some arrangements may be established to provide “on-call” reaction capability. NATO, and particularly U.S., forces have started to deploy more “non-lethal” weapons to provide greater flexibility in dealing with violent crowds that often purposely include many women and children.

It is, however, to minimize DFOR involvement in criminal pursuit and resettlement activities that the Clinton Administration continues to press for the creation of an *armed* international police task force in Bosnia. The current United Nations-sponsored police personnel in Bosnia are unarmed observers and trainers.

Other NATO allies have not responded enthusiastically to this initiative; however it is still under consideration at NATO Headquarters. If such a force were to be established, it is possible that it may rely, to a large extent, on the more heavily armed paramilitary police formations found in other countries, but not in the United States (e.g., Italy's Carabinieri, France's Gendarmerie, or Spain's Guardia Civil).

Currently, NATO policymakers -- both political and military -- are confronted with the challenge of facilitating the implementation of the Dayton Accords, and providing clear definitions of SFOR's responsibilities, while allowing military commanders on the ground the flexibility and capacity to respond to events in a timely and effective manner. The extent to which the controversy over "mission creep" may intensify will probably be largely dependent upon the frequency and seriousness of any violence against SFOR troops.

### **Administration Policy on SFOR and an SFOR Follow-on Force (Prepared by Julie Kim and Steven Woehrel)**

Until November 1996, the Clinton Administration avoided making any firm pronouncements on possible successor missions to IFOR or possible U.S. participation in such a mission, emphasizing rather IFOR's scheduled completion and full withdrawal by the end of 1996. Throughout that year, Administration officials had reiterated the President's pledge to keep the U.S. troop commitment to IFOR to about one year. Administration officials acknowledged the probable need for some sort of international military presence to remain in Bosnia after IFOR, but would not commit to a position on U.S. participation.

On November 15, 1996, President Clinton announced that the United States would take part in a NATO follow-on force in Bosnia. He estimated that the U.S. troop contribution to SFOR would amount to about 8,500 troops, or less than half the number of U.S. troops in IFOR. He recommended an 18-month mandate for the NATO force, with further reductions envisaged at six-month review intervals. NATO's later decisions formally establishing SFOR upheld these principles.

The principal rationale for continued U.S. military engagement in Bosnia developed by the Administration was that, notwithstanding the many achievements of IFOR, peace efforts in Bosnia still needed additional time to consolidate. An outside security force would be able to provide the stability for economic reconstruction and political reconciliation to continue. Administration analysts assessed that hostilities were likely to resume in Bosnia after a full withdrawal of international forces.

At the same time, the Administration rejected a simple extension of IFOR's mandate. Instead, it emphasized that IFOR had indeed completed its mission within 12 months and that the Stabilization Force and its mission were distinct from IFOR. The Administration differentiated SFOR from IFOR in response to charges that it had broken its promise of completing IFOR's mission in 12 months. President Clinton also made the claim that the SFOR mission was "far more limited" than IFOR's, thus

requiring fewer troops. Plans to steadily reduce the force's size indicated that SFOR was expected to do less, rather than more, than IFOR.

In early 1997, Administration officials offered predictions that another successor force may well be required to follow SFOR after June 1998. However, Defense Secretary William Cohen strenuously emphasized the firmness of the Administration's commitment of U.S. troops to SFOR for 18 months only. Secretary Cohen stated that he would pursue the possibility of having the Europeans develop a post-SFOR operation.<sup>1</sup> Many observers expressed skepticism about this strategy, since no European power has yet demonstrated any inclination to lead or even participate in a post-SFOR force without the United States. In late 1997, top Administration officials began to lay the groundwork for an extended U.S. military commitment to Bosnia. In September, National Security Advisor Samuel Berger reiterated that the United States maintained a significant stake in Dayton's success and left open the possibility of a longer-term engagement in Bosnia. On November 4, President Clinton met with congressional leaders to discuss progress in Bosnia and the possibility of U.S. participation in a future multilateral force.

On December 18, 1997, President Clinton announced that he had agreed in principle that U.S. forces should participate in a Bosnia peacekeeping force after the mandate of the current SFOR expires in June 1998. He said he would formally commit U.S. forces to the mission only after NATO planners have worked out the details of the objectives, size and duration of the new force in early January. The President laid out several criteria for agreeing to the final plan for the new force. President Clinton said the mission of the new force must be achievable, and tied to concrete benchmarks, not a deadline. He expressed "hope" that the force will be smaller than SFOR, but that it must be large enough to protect itself and achieve its mission. He added that the United States must retain command of the force and that U.S. allies must assume their share of responsibility within the force. The President said the cost of the force must be manageable and that the plan for the force must have "substantial" support from Congress and the American people.

President Clinton said that the new force was needed in order to preserve the gains made in the past two years by U.S. and allied peacekeepers in Bosnia. He said that, while significant progress had been made in many areas, the gains could be reversed and a follow-on force to SFOR was needed to keep Bosnia on the path to a self-sustaining peace. President Clinton laid out five key tasks for U.S. and international civilian efforts in Bosnia: to deepen and spread economic opportunity while rooting out corruption; retrain and re-equip the police ; restructure the media to meet international standards of objectivity and access; help more refugees to return home; and bring war criminals to justice. He said that an international military presence was needed to provide a secure environment for these civilian efforts. The President broke with the earlier practice of providing deadlines. Instead, he outlined some of the possible benchmarks that could determine when an international military presence in Bosnia would no longer be needed. These include self-sustaining joint institutions; the end of political party control of the media, which the President said

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Senate. Committee on Armed Services. Hearing on the Fiscal Year 1998 Defense Budget. February 13, 1997.

have been "instruments of hate and venom"; the development of a sufficiently large, well-trained and well-managed police force; and democratic control over the military. President Clinton visited U.S. troops in Bosnia and Bosnian leaders on December 23. Clinton emphasized the responsibility of the Bosnian people to secure their own peace, but with the support of the United States and rest of the world.

## **Congressional Concerns (Prepared by Julie Kim and Steven Woehrel)**

President Clinton's decision to deploy U.S. forces to the NATO Implementation Force was fiercely debated in Congress in late 1995. At the time, many Members of Congress were extremely concerned about the potential for large numbers of U.S. casualties in a "quagmire." Many also doubted whether vital U.S. interests were at stake in Bosnia. President Clinton requested an "expression of support" from the Congress for the Bosnia deployment. In December 1995, the House of Representatives and the Senate passed separate resolutions expressing support for U.S. troops being sent to Bosnia. Legislative efforts to reject the President's decision by barring funds for the deployment of U.S. troops to Bosnia were narrowly rejected.<sup>2</sup>

In 1996, as it became clearer to most observers that a follow-on mission to IFOR would be required, both Houses of Congress held numerous hearings on the future of U.S. forces in Bosnia. While all praised the performance of U.S. troops in IFOR, some Members charged that the Administration was breaking its promise to keep U.S. troops in Bosnia for one year only. Many Members also criticized the Administration for not consulting with Congress in a forthright manner on the realistic prospects for a follow-on mission. This time the Administration did not request an explicit expression of support from Congress for SFOR. In the end, however, the 104th Congress adjourned before final decisions were made on SFOR and without any vote on the subject.

In the 105th Congress, many Members expressed concern that U.S. troops could be committed to Bosnia beyond the June 1998 deadline set for SFOR. This concern was reflected in legislation. In March 1997, the Administration submitted a request for about \$2 billion in emergency supplemental appropriations and rescissions for FY1997 to cover DoD costs of contingency operations in Bosnia and elsewhere, and emergency disaster relief in the United States. The Senate version of the bill (H.R. 1469) barred funding for a U.S. ground deployment in Bosnia beyond June 30, 1998 and required the President to submit a detailed report on the costs of the Bosnia deployment, and of other aspects of U.S. policy toward Bosnia before funds from the supplemental can be made available. The House version did not contain these provisions. The measure passed the House on May 15, 1997, and the Senate on May 16. The House and Senate approved a conference agreement on June 5; the

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<sup>2</sup>For further information on the congressional debate on IFOR, see U.S. Library of Congress. Congressional Research Service. *Bosnia Implementation Force (IFOR) and Stabilization Force (SFOR): Activities of the 104th Congress*, by Julie Kim. Updated January 6, 1997.



conference report did not include the funds cut-off for the Bosnia deployment. The President vetoed the bill on June 9 over policy provisions unrelated to foreign policy. The President signed the bill without the controversial provisions on June 12 (P.L. 105-18), providing DoD with \$1.9 billion to cover SFOR-related costs. The law required the President to submit a detailed report on the costs of the Bosnia deployment within 60 days.

The House-passed version of H.R. 2266, the FY 1998 defense appropriations bill, barred funding for the deployment of U.S. ground forces to Bosnia after June 1998. The Senate-passed version of the bill did not contain this provision. The conference report did not include the fund cut-off. Section 8132 of the conference report, passed by both Houses on September 25, 1997 and signed by the President on October 8 (P.L. 105- 56), bars funding for the deployment of U.S. forces in Bosnia beyond June 1998, unless the President certifies to the bipartisan leadership of Congress by May 15, 1998 that a continued deployment is needed to meet the national security interests of the United States. The certification will include why such a deployment is in the national interest, how many U.S. troops will be deployed and for what duration, the mission and objectives and exit strategy for those forces, the cost of the operation and the impact of the deployment on the morale, retention, and effectiveness of U.S. forces. The section also says that the President shall submit a supplemental appropriations request for any deployment beyond June 1998.

The conference report for the defense authorization bill (H.R. 1119) contains a non-binding provision (Section 1202) that says that "it is the sense of Congress that United States ground combat forces should not participate in a follow-on force in Bosnia and Herzegovina after June 1998." The section also says that the United States may decide to provide support to a follow-on force of European ground troops, under the aegis of the European Security and Defense Identity or NATO, in "command and control, intelligence, logistics and, if necessary, a ready reserve force in the region." Section 1203 would prohibit funding for the deployment of U.S. ground forces in Bosnia after June 30, 1998, unless the President certifies by May 15, 1998 to the bipartisan leadership of Congress that a deployment beyond June 1998 is needed to meet U.S. national security interests and that U.S. forces will not be used as "civil police" in Bosnia. The President would be required to submit a detailed report on an extended Bosnian operation similar to the report required by the FY1998 defense appropriations law. Section 1204 requires two reports by the Secretary of Defense to the congressional defense committees on the activities carried out by U.S. forces in Bosnia. Section 1205 requires another Presidential report on the implementation of the Bosnia peace accord and steps to be taken to transfer responsibility to a European-led peacekeeping force. The House approved the conference report on October 28. The Senate approved the report on November 6, and it was signed by the President on November 18 (P.L. 105-85).

### **SFOR Costs (Prepared by Steven Woehrel)**

As with IFOR, each participating nation covers the costs of its Bosnia-related operations. A July 1997 GAO report (GAO/T-NSIAD-97-216) cites Administration estimates that IFOR and SFOR would cost the United States about \$5 billion for FY 1996 and FY 1997 combined. The Administration estimate for FY 1998 was \$1.5 billion. This FY 1998 estimate assumed that SFOR would be reduced in size after the

September 1997 Bosnian local elections, and would be completely withdrawn by June 1998. However, NATO has decided that SFOR should continue at its current strength until June 1998. The GAO report said that the Department of Defense estimated that this would increase the cost by about \$160 million. The President's December 18, 1997 decision to commit U.S. forces to Bosnia beyond June 1998 will increase the cost of the operation by an additional, as-yet undetermined amount.

### **U.S. Commitment (Prepared by Steven Woehrel)**

Some Members of Congress endorsed the President's December 18, 1997 decision to keep U.S. troops in Bosnia beyond June 1998. Senator John Warner expressed support for the decision, saying that a continued U.S. presence is necessary to ensure regional stability and maintain NATO's credibility. He added that he believes that an international military force would be needed in Bosnia for "a minimum of two years, and probably longer," until a self-sustaining peace can take hold. Senator Carl Levin said that he supported the President's decision, but warned that "some outside force will be needed for a decade or more, but we just simply can't stay that long." He stressed that NATO has to develop a "clear roadmap of civilian implementation with milestones and timelines." He said that the continued U.S. deployment, which he said could last "a couple of years," should be used to prepare the way for a European-only ground force for the long term.

Other Members of Congress criticized President Clinton's decision to extend the deployment of U.S. troops in Bosnia. Senator John McCain said that the Administration has a "credibility problem" on the Bosnia issues, after having promised to end the U.S. deployment twice in the past two years and later having extended the mission. He added that "tying the U.S. military presence to achieving...lagging political objectives is not sufficient or appropriate for defining a military mission." Representative John Kasich wrote a letter to President Clinton calling for the scrapping of the Dayton Peace Accords, which he said "may be unrealistic and will increasingly become a hindrance to a final settlement that will allow U.S. troops to withdraw." He called for an international conference by June 30, 1998 to work out a new political settlement for Bosnia.

Congress will likely address the issue of the U.S. troop commitment to Bosnia in a FY 1998 supplemental appropriation bill to pay the costs of SFOR's successor force for the last quarter of FY 1998, as well as in the FY 1999 defense authorization and appropriations bills.



SFOR Dispositions. SOURCE: URL [www/dtic.dla.mil:80/bosniemap.html](http://www/dtic.dla.mil:80/bosniemap.html)